

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim 11, and A pull-behind mower for cutting ground vegetation, said mower configured to be pulled behind a vehicle and powered independently of the vehicle, said mower comprising:

a frame presenting a fore end and an aft end;

a hitch coupled to the fore end and configured to releasably couple the frame to the vehicle
in a manner that permits pivoting of the frame relative to the vehicle;

a pair of laterally spaced wheels coupled to the aft end and adapted to rollingly support the
frame on the ground;

a mowing deck operable to cut vegetation when positioned proximate the ground;

a support arm comprising a frame-side section rotatably coupled to the frame and a deck-side
section rigidly coupled to the deck, said frame-side and deck-side sections being
hingedly intercoupled;

a motor rigidly coupled to the frame and drivingly connected to the deck, so as to power the
deck independently of the vehicle; and

a drive train for transferring power from the motor to the deck,
said drive train including a first rotatable drive shaft, a second rotatable drive shaft, and a U-
joint coupled between the first and second drive shafts.

13. (Original) A mower according to claim 12,
said support arm permitting pivoting of the deck relative to the frame on first and second
distinct and intersecting pivot axes,

said U-joint being centered proximate the intersection of the first and second pivot axes.

14. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim ~~[[11]]~~ 12,
said frame-side section being rotatable relative to the frame on a first pivot axis,
said frame-side and deck-side sections being hingedly intercoupled on a second pivot axes,
said first and second pivot axes being substantially perpendicular to one another.

15. (Original) A mower according to claim 14,
said first and second pivot axes intersecting one another.

16. (Original) A mower according to claim 15,
said first pivot axis being generally upright.

17-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim ~~[[24]]~~ 27,
said support arm permitting pivoting of the deck relative to the frame on the ~~first and second~~
~~distinct and intersecting~~ pivot axes,
said U-joint being centered proximate the intersection of the first and second pivot axes.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim ~~[[26]]~~ 30,
said first and second pivot axes intersecting one another.

28-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim 29, A pull-behind mower for cutting ground vegetation, said mower configured to be pulled behind a vehicle, said mower comprising:

a frame presenting a fore end and an aft end;
a hitch coupled to the fore end and configured to releasably couple the frame to the vehicle
in a manner that permits pivoting of the frame relative to the vehicle;
a pair of laterally spaced wheels coupled to the aft end and adapted to rollingly support the
frame on the ground;
a mowing deck operable to cut vegetation when positioned proximate the ground;
a support arm comprising a frame-side section rotatably coupled to the frame and a deck-side
section rigidly coupled to the deck, said frame-side and deck-side sections being
hingedly intercoupled;
a motor for powering the deck;
a drive train for transferring power from the motor to the deck,
said drive train including a first rotatable drive shaft, a second rotatable drive shaft, and a U-
joint coupled between the first and second drive shafts,
said frame-side section being rotatable relative to the frame on a first pivot axis,
said frame-side and deck-side sections being hingedly intercoupled on a second pivot axes,
said first and second pivot axes being substantially perpendicular to one another,
said first pivot axis being generally upright; and
a mechanism operable to inhibit pivoting of the deck on the second pivot axis;
said mechanism being operable to selectively inhibit downward pivoting of the deck on the
second pivot axis.

31. (Original) A mower according to claim 30,
said mechanism comprising a cable coupled to the frame and the deck.

32. (Currently Amended) ~~A mower according to claim 24,~~ A pull-behind mower for cutting ground vegetation, said mower configured to be pulled behind a vehicle, said mower comprising:

a frame presenting a fore end and an aft end;

a hitch coupled to the fore end and configured to releasably couple the frame to the vehicle
in a manner that permits pivoting of the frame relative to the vehicle;

a pair of laterally spaced wheels coupled to the aft end and adapted to rollingly support the
frame on the ground;

a mowing deck operable to cut vegetation when positioned proximate the ground;

a support arm comprising a frame-side section rotatably coupled to the frame and a deck-side
section rigidly coupled to the deck, said frame-side and deck-side sections being
hingedly intercoupled;

a motor for powering the deck; and

a drive train for transferring power from the motor to the deck;

said drive train including a first rotatable drive shaft, a second rotatable drive shaft, and a U-
joint coupled between the first and second drive shafts,

said motor being rigidly coupled to the frame so as to power the deck independently of the
vehicle.

33. (Original) A mower according to claim 32,
said motor being a gas-powered motor.

34. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 12,
said motor being a gas-powered motor.

35. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim ~~[[4]]~~ 14,
a mechanism operable to inhibit pivoting of the deck on the second pivot axis.

36. (Currently Amended) ~~A mower according to claim 35;~~ A pull-behind mower for cutting ground vegetation, said mower comprising:

a frame adapted to be coupled to a vehicle and rollingly supported on the ground;
a motor rigidly coupled to the frame;
a mowing deck coupled to the frame for pivotal movement relative to the frame on first and
second intersecting pivot axes;
a drive train for drivingly coupling the motor to the deck so that the motor powers the deck;
said drive train including a first rotatable drive shaft, a second rotatable drive shaft, and a U-
joint coupled between the first and second drive shafts for rotation therewith,
said U-joint being centered proximate the intersection of the first and second pivot axes,
said deck being pivotable relative to the frame on the first pivot axis between a retracted
position and an extended position,
said deck being pivotable relative to the frame on the second pivot axis between an engaged
position and a disengaged position,
said first and second pivot axes being at least substantially perpendicular to one another,
said first pivot axis being generally upright; and
a mechanism operable to inhibit pivoting of the deck on the second pivot axis; and
said mechanism being operable to selectively inhibit downward pivoting of the deck on the
second pivot axis.

37. (Original) A mower according to claim 36,
said mechanism comprising a cable coupled to the frame and the deck.

38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 12,
said U-joint being a Hooke's joint.

Application No. 10/814,009
Amendment dated January 20, 2006
Reply to Office Action of June 21, 2005

40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently Amended) A mower according to claim ~~[[24]]~~ 30,
said U-joint being a Hooke's joint.